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# UNITED NATIONS NIGERIA NEWSLETTER



## Nigeria Commits to domestication of Kampala Convention On Internally Displaced Persons



Nigeria's Minister for Humanitarian Affairs (right), UN Resident Coordinator Matthias Schmale (2nd from right), UNHCR Representative to Nigeria Chansa Kapaya (second from left) and other dignitaries showing Nigeria's long-awaited IDP Policy at its launch in Abuja in March. Photo: UNHCR/Roland Schoenbauer

Nigeria started drafting a Policy for its now 3.2 million IDPs back in 2001 to which UNHCR provided technical support at various stages of the review. On March 22, 2022, the national IDP Policy which had been approved by the Federal Executive Council in September 2021, was finally launched in a ceremony presided by the Federal Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development. The policy references UN guiding principles on internal displacement and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention).

The Minister confirmed the government would move forward with the domestication of the Kampala Convention through the development of an implementation plan for the Policy for which a Working Committee was announced. The Minister also confirmed the plan foresaw as a priority the development of a standalone executive bill for which support from UNHCR has been sought.

The UN Resident Coordinator (RC) in Nigeria, speaking on behalf of all agencies, congratulated the government on the launch of the Policy, pledged continued support for strengthening the national mechanism for IDP protection and emphasised the need for sustained access to the displaced populations. Both, an ECOWAS Representative and the RC, urged Nigeria to fast-track the domestication of the Kampala Convention.

The Kampala Convention is a treaty of the African Union (AU) that addresses internal displacement caused by armed conflict, natural disasters and large-scale development projects in Africa.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Empowering Displaced Women, Girls and Persons with Disabilities... P. 3

UN Calls For Stronger Media Partnership To Achieve SDGs...P.6

UN Assists More than 500 Nigerians Stranded in Libya To Return Home...P.8  
ACCEL Africa Project Empowers Cooperatives... P.13

## FG Commends UN, MAIN For Training Journalists On SDGs



Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs, H.E. Princess Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire, declares the training open in Maiduguri.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has commended the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) and Media Awareness and Information For All Network (MAIN) for the nation-wide training of Nigerian journalists on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Speaking at the flag-off of the training in Maiduguri on Monday 7 March 2022, the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs, H.E. Princess Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire, expressed her appreciation to UNIC and MAIN "for facilitating this strategic initiative. It is gladdening to have us utilise this platform to engage and reaffirm your contributions as critical stakeholders and partners in advocacy and sensitization...continue on page 2.



## FG Commends UN For Training Journalists On SDGs...continued from page 1



A cross-section of participants at the training in Maiduguri, Borno State.

...for the achievement of the Global Goals and for our national development."

The training in Maiduguri was the flag-off of series of training workshops planned to take place in the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. Other locations are Kano (North-Central); Abuja (North-Central); Enugu (South-East); Uyo (South-South); and Lagos (South-West).

Princess Adefulire explained that the nexus of Journalism and the SDGs places the media at the core of sustainable development - both as contributors and as beneficiaries.

She re-affirmed President Muhammadu Buhari's commitment to the successful implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria.

"We urge you to strengthen partnership and collaboration with us, as we continue to advocate for inclusive and sustainable national development in this 'Decade of Action' for the SDGs." She added.

The Director of UNIC, Ronald Kayanja, acknowledged the strategic importance of the media in the achievement of the SDGs, noting that they have a critical role to play at the national and sub-national level.

The chairman of MAIN, Prof Lai Oso, stated the objectives of the training as capacitating journalists with knowledge of sustainable development, to engender high-quality journalistic practice that holds government accountable to Agenda 2030; acquainting journalists of SDGs targets and indicators and how to monitor specific indicators of SDGs and generate compelling stories and reports that will galvanise local and people's action for sustainable development in Nigeria; among others.

### In Kano

"This training underscores the critical role of the media in accelerating the decade of action towards achieving the sustainable development goals in Nigeria," said the National Information Officer of UNIC, Oluseyi Soremekun, representing the UNIC Director, Ronald Kayanja. He added that journalists needed to have a deeper knowledge of SDGs framework for them to be in a position to hold government accountable in the implementation of the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

The Vice Chancellor of Federal University Kashere, Gombe State, Prof Umaru Pate, acknowledged the importance of the training and called on UNIC and MAIN to scale up the workshop to involve Editors and Management staff of media organisations.

Dr. Zakariya Muhammed of the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs OSSAP-SDGs Nigeria, disclosed that the Federal Government of Nigeria had integrated the three Dimensions of the SDGs – economic, social and environmental – into the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017-2020.

Discussing the key economic, social and environmental issues in Kano, Dr. Ruqqayat Yusuf Aliu, Bayero University Kano, observed that 'the groundnuts pyramids have since vanished; tomatoes are wasting due to lack of storage and preservation; Drug abuse, street begging, child labour and Trafficking, are



L-R: Dr. Jide Jimoh (LASU); OSSAP-SDGs Head of Communication, Mr Rotimi Ajayi; Akwa-Ibom Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Comrade Ini Ememobong Essien; Ms Ime David (Akwa-Ibom SDGs Office); Chairman of MAIN, Prof Lai Oso; and UNIC National Information Officer, Oluseyi Soremekun, at the training in Uyo.



A group photograph of participants at the training in Kano, Kano State,

thriving; while desertification and land degradation pose a huge challenge." She explained, 'all these are issues connected to and expected to be addressed by the SDGs.

### In Abuja

In accelerating solutions towards achieving the Sustainable Development



UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator Matthias Schmale decorates one of the participants, Mr Paulinus Osiomeye of The Sun newspaper, as a Champion of SDGs.

ment Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030 in Nigeria, the National Information Officer of the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Lagos, Seyi Soremekun, has urged Nigerian journalists to ensure their news reports and features have depth in sustainability.

"Journalists should rise above mere reporting of events. They need to invest time and energies in diving deeper into sustainability issues around an event," He said.

The Senior Technical Adviser in the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs, Dr. Bala Yunusa, noted that the SDGs could not be achieved with stand-alone programmes and projects. "They must be carefully integrated into national and sub-national policies and development plans." He explained.

### In Uyo

"Gender equality is central to all the SDGs, but often women end up on the short end of the means of implementation, in whatever form." This was said by Dr. Ekaete Akpabio, a gender expert from the University of Uyo at the Training of Journalists on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) held at Royal Diadem Hotel and Events Centre, Uyo, the Akwa-Ibom State capital.

Dr. Akpabio advocated for increased gender – responsive budgeting to direct funds to programmes that would benefit women and also address the huge funding gaps in what women really need.

"Mr Elijah Udoiyak, the SDGs Focal Person in Akwa-Ibom State, represented by Ms Ime David, noted that in implementing the SDG-1 (No Poverty), the State Government granted ₦2Billion interest free loan to over 4,500 market women and other women in the 31 LGAs in the state.



## Empowering Displaced Women, Girls And Persons With Disabilities In North-East Nigeria



New skills courtesy of IOM's Women's Participation Project are empowering women and girls in north-east Nigeria. IOM 2021/Stylia Kampani

"I can now freely talk in front of men and express my needs and concerns about the household and children," Falmata admits with confidence.

To date the WPP is in nine camps in six Local Government Area (LGAs) where more than 9,720 individuals have benefited through various activities.

"Myself and other people with disabilities were not allowed to take part in any camp activity." says Habiba, a 30-year-old woman from Bama LGA. Now things are different thanks to the sensitization conducted by the Women's Participation Project team in the camp. We, the people with disabilities, are now participating in training courses for leadership skills and facemasks production. Joining the women's committee has been

extremely helpful because women and girls with disabilities have now been recognized and are involved in camp activities."

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, 41 women and girls, in-

Since 2009 and the start of conflict in northeast Nigeria, millions of people have been displaced. More than two million are living in temporary settlements and camp sites across Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states. More than half of the displaced population living in camps in northeast Nigeria are women and girls.

They experience displacement differently from men and boys and face specific challenges such as exclusion from decision making processes and participation in livelihood activities. Those with disabilities are further excluded and alienated which has a direct impact on their well-being and psychosocial health. Their concerns and voices are unheard.



New skills courtesy of IOM's Women's Participation Project are empowering women and girls in north-east Nigeria. IOM 2021/Stylia Kampani



Women at Gubio Camp in north-east Nigeria have learned through skill acquisition training how to tailor bags and sell them to generate income. Photo: IOM 2021/Miller Jeremiah Kevin

cluding those with disabilities, were trained in the production of facemasks. In just a few months, they produced 21,000 facemasks which were distributed in Gubio camp, Borno State, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"I used to watch my brother sewing at home." says Habiba. "I always had a passion for sewing but I can't press and propel the machine with my legs. I am grateful to WPP for the special hand sewing machine and training provided by IOM. I would like to get my own sewing machine and start a tailoring business after this skills acquisition programme."

The Women's Participation Project (WPP) of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), has since 2018 sought to empower individuals affected by these challenges while ensuring that cultural norms and customary traditions of the displaced populations are respected. It further seeks to enhance women's participation in decision making to reduce their perception of risk to gender-based violence. This is achieved through livelihood support in tailoring, traditional pasta making and cap making, leadership skills training, inclusion of people with disabilities in camp activities through provision of mobility aids/assistive devices among others.

Falmata is a 55-year-old mother living in an IDP camp in Bama. She has a proactive role in the camp as a representative of all women IDPs. Since she got involved in the WPP she has been vouching for women's views and concerns where decisions are taken, encouraging women to participate in camp activities.

The WPP started in 2016, by carrying out a pilot study in Adamawa state and with support from USAID it was extended to more LGAs in northeast Nigeria in 2018.



IOM distributes learner kits, including books, pencils, notebook and other essentials, for the skills enhancement trainings. IOM 2021/Miller Jeremiah Kevin





Spotlight Initiative



EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls

## One-Day High Level-Monitoring Visit To Adamawa State



A group photograph of the High-Level Monitoring delegation to Adamawa by the Honorable Minister for Women Affairs, Federal Minister of State for Finance, Budget and National Planning, the European Union Ambassador and Head of EU Delegation in Nigeria, the UN Resident Coordinator, Heads of the Spotlight Initiative UN Agencies in Nigeria

Located in the highlands of mountains and breath-taking sceneries in the country, Adamawa state played host to the European Union delegates, the United Nations Agencies and the Civil Society Reference Group led by the UN Resident Coordinator on 21st February 2022.

The event was a one-day high level-monitoring visit to Adamawa State organized by the European Union and United Nations Spotlight Initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in Nigeria. The state is one of the five states where the initiative is being implemented. The purpose of the visit was to monitor key projects implemented in the State by resident United Nations Agencies (RUNOs) under the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative as well as to advocate for the passage of the Violence against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act.

UNESCO, in collaboration with the Adamawa state Mass Education Board and Grassroots Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition (GESA), through the Spotlight Initiative is implementing the Second Chance Education programme for women and girls on the margins of society who are either living with HIV/AIDS or are victims of early and unintended pregnancy, child marriage, and gender-based violence; or are classified as rural poor.

The Executive Secretary of Mass Education Board, Mrs. Tahumareino Angelina Pagiel, on behalf of the Hon. Commissioner for Education, Adamawa State, Mrs. Wilbina Jackson, received the monitoring team. The team interacted with the beneficiar-

ies of the Second Chance Education, who shared their experiences during the programme. The beneficiaries expressed their gratitude for the initiative which provided them the unique opportunity to become literate and for the positive transformation in their social norms, attitudes and behaviours.

Through the Spotlight Initiative, UNESCO sensitized 9,034 women and girls with information on gender-based violence (GBV), sexual and reproductive health and right (SRHR) and harmful practices and, enrolled them into the second chance education.

In addition, 6,269 vulnerable women and girls acquired basic literacy skills and 437 beneficiaries were mainstreamed to Post Literacy Level, equivalent to Primary six (6) in the formal school system, while 110 girls and boys were mainstreamed back to the formal school system, thus reducing the number of out-of-school children in the state. In addition to these achievements, over 875 women and girls have acquired various vocational skills, including 179 people with disabilities (PWD) who also benefitted from the programme.

Securing the future of women and girls and passing the Violence against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act are prerequisites for achieving gender equality and development in Adamawa state. It was on this note that the Executive Governor of Adamawa State, RT. Hon. Alhaji Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri assured the delegation that the VAPP Act would be signed into law by his administration.



## FG, UN Launch Strategic Vision For Nigeria 2030

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) recently launched the Strategic Vision for Nigeria 2030 in Abuja together with the Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, SAN.

The Strategic Vision provides a roadmap for UNODC's partnership with the government and people of Nigeria, which aims to strengthen concerted efforts to prevent and tackle crime, terrorism, corruption and the world drug problem, and their effects on the economy, environment, and people. It seeks to leverage UNODC's revitalized approach to the continent outlined in its Strategic Vision for Africa 2030, while focusing on the specific needs, challenges, and priorities of Nigeria.

In his Keynote Address, the Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami highlighted that, "the Federal Government is in support of the Strategic Vision for Nigeria 2030 which will support Nigeria in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDG 16 aimed at promoting peaceful inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice institutions at all levels. Nigeria also welcomes the thematic Five (5) Priority Areas of the Strategic Vision".

UNODC Country Representative to Nigeria, Oliver Stolpe said through the Strategic Vision for Nigeria, UNODC aim to achieve the following: "make the criminal justice system more effective; safeguard institutions and the economy



EFCC Chairman, Abdulrasheed Bawa, UNODC Country Representative, Oliver Stolpe flanked by stakeholders at the launch of UNODC's Strategic Vision for Nigeria 2030. Photo: Ogechi Okorundu

from illicit financial flows and corruption; fight terrorism and violent extremism; protect people and the environment from organized crime; and promote health through better drug use prevention, counselling and treatment, as well as better access to health services for people who use drugs and people in detention who live with HIV".

The Strategic Vision represents a renewed pledge for UNODC and Nigeria to work together towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The document is the result of extensive consultations with UNODC's government counterparts, civil society and academia, the private sector, and members of the United Nations country team in Nigeria.

## UN Unveils Nigeria's Training Module On Investigative Interviewing, Right To Remain Silent And Prohibition Of Torture



Rear Admiral YEM Musa, Coordinator of the Counter Terrorism Centre (CTC) in the Office of the National Security Adviser (centre) poses with stakeholders at the unveiling of the training Module. Photo: Ogechi Okorundu

strategies can play in contributing to the outcome of criminal proceedings, and consequently to the effectiveness of the Nigerian criminal justice system at large.

The module is designed to serve as a practical tool for the training of practitioners working in the criminal justice sector in Nigeria, including public prosecutors, judges, defence lawyers, investigators, legal advisers and officials of national law enforcement and security agencies. It provides practical guidance on human rights-compliant best practices for conducting investigative interviews that respect the indivisible rights of suspects in line with the Méndez Principles on Effective

Interviewing for Investigations and Information Gathering.

The Nigeria Training Module on Investigative Interviewing, the Right to Remain Silent and the Prohibition of Torture focuses on the Nigerian context and the Nigerian legal framework while referring to applicable regional and international law, and good practices. It takes note of the most recent legislation relevant to the criminal justice system in Nigeria, including the Nigerian Correctional Service Act, 2019 and other legal and policy developments.

Building on the 2019 UNODC Nigeria Training Module on Gender Dimensions of Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism, it also emphasizes the gender dimensions of investigative interviewing, including key safeguards for the prevention of torture.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, working with the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, and supported by the European Union, has presented its new Nigeria Training Module on Investigative Interviewing, the Right to Remain Silent and the Prohibition of Torture at a launch event held in Abuja's Transcorp Hotel attended by senior figures from Nigeria's law enforcement, security, and judicial communities.

This training module was developed to place special emphasis on the importance of ensuring effective and human rights compliant interviewing within the broader framework of criminal investigations. UNODC believes that the module is particularly relevant given the vital role that successful interviewing

## UN Calls For Stronger Media Partnership To Achieve SDGs, Advocates For Factual And Evidence-Based Reporting



L-R: Deputy Country Representative of UN Women to Nigeria and the ECOWAS, Mr. Lansana Wonneh; UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Mr. Matthias Schmale; and Chairman of Media Awareness and Information For All Network (MAIN), Prof Lai Oso, at the training held in the UN House Abuja.  
Photo: © UNIC Lagos

Towards achieving the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development in Nigeria, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Matthias Schmale, has called for a stronger partnership with the media in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“Media play a central role in achieving Agenda 2030, one of which is to make sure the citizens are well-informed about what is going on, to enable them form opinions based on facts provided by the media. Therefore, Factual and evidence-based reporting is critical at this period of widespread of fake news,” he said at the closing of a 2-day training of journalists on SDGs, and developing a Nigeria Network of Sustainable Development Journalists, organized by the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Lagos, in collaboration with Media Awareness and Information For All Network (MAIN), and held on 24 – 25 March at the UN House Abuja.

The media, according to the Resident Coordinator, need to help spread factual information about the SDGs and to hold government accountable on what is being done and the progress being recorded.

Schmale further explained that the “UN is supporting the government of Nigeria to address its challenges and to realise its development aspirations and the transformative change. They cannot do it alone. The United Nations also cannot do it alone. We need stronger partnership, and the media fit well into this partnership.”

On gender equality, the Resident Coordinator called on the media to intensify profiling successful Nigerian women to motivate other women and girls to break the gender barriers. “A third of CEOs of Banks are women and Nigeria has the highest number of female representatives on Boards of private sector organisations in Africa. Media need to do more in profiling many successful Nigerian women for the purpose of learning and motivating other women.” He observed.

In his presentation titled, “Gender Equality And SDGs: The Role of Journalists in ensuring progress”, the Deputy Country Representative of UN Women to Nigeria and the ECOWAS, Lansana Wonneh, emphasized that unless progress on gender equality was accelerated, the global community would fail to achieve the SDGs.

According to him, Gender equality is a right and at the centre of the SDGs. Fulfilling this right is the best chance to address economic crisis; lack of health care; climate change; violence against women; and escalating conflicts.” He said and called on journalists to amplify the voice of vulnerable women in their reportage, while ensuring accountability in the commitments made to women through appropriate budget allocations and delivery of services,

“Acknowledge women’s voice so that other women get motivation and support. Make the society aware of women’s right to equal access to opportunities and provide information and interpretations to policy makers for formulating policies on local gender issues.” He added.

Earlier, the Senior Technical Adviser in the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs, Dr. Bala Yunusa, noted that the SDGs could not be achieved with stand-alone programmes and projects. “They must be carefully integrated into national and sub-national policies and development plans.” He explained.

Special Adviser on SDGs to the FCT Minister of State, Hajiya Hiba Ahmed, in her remarks commended UNIC and MAIN for organising the media training. She was represented by Mr. Ona Joseph Ndubuisi.

The Chairman of MAIN, Prof. Lai Oso, in his overview of the training, noted that none of the 17 goals of SDG could be achieved without active cultivation and cooperation of the media. The media, according to him, have become central to the initiation, execution and public support of any policy and programme of development.

“It is in realization of the importance of communication and the media that the need to train, equip and deploy an informed media to achieve SDG goals has become imperative.” He said.



## UN Provides Support For Formulation Of Information Guide For Reintegration Of Migrant Workers

Following the need to ensure the sustainable return and reintegration of migrant workers into Nigerian society, the ILO provided technical and financial support to enable workers' organizations in Nigeria to develop an Information Guide to complement the national Standard Operating Procedures and practices.



Group Photograph of Participants at the two – day review and validation workshop on Information Guide for Reintegration of Migrant Workers.

In a bid towards ensuring migrant workers who are returning to Nigeria have access to verifiable and easy to use information, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has developed and validated an Information Guide aimed at contributing to closing information gaps during return, readmission, and reintegration processes.

The Information Guide was developed as part of an ongoing Implementation Agreement between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Nigeria Labour Congress, in which the NLC desirous to complement established Standard Operating Procedures of the Government, initiated the development of a user-friendly resource, to address challenges associated with access to information for migrants returning to Nigeria.

While welcoming participants to the two – day review/validation workshop, Mr. Emmanuel Ugboaja, General Secretary of NLC informed the gathering that developing an Information Guide is in line with aspirations of the Congress to facilitate multi-sectoral engagement of actors who have varying mandates related to return and reintegration processes. He noted that affiliates and stakeholders alike have a role to play in supporting sustainable reintegration of returning migrant workers, as well as the overall migration governance processes.

Adding that the Guide will further serve as an advocacy tool for workers organizations around labour migration governance, especially as it relates to mechanisms targeted at protecting and promoting the rights of migrant workers, he appreciated the ILO for the institutional support provided which has been made possible within the framework of the FAIRWAY programme funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC).

Ms. Vanessa Phala, Director of the ILO Abuja Country Office who was represented at the event by Austin Erameh, National Project Coordinator of the FAIRWAY programme in Nigeria, commended the NLC for the initiative, noting that the Guide is aligned to the outcome of the project that seeks to contribute to workers organizations being effectively engaged for promoting decent work for migrant workers.

She acknowledged the important role workers' organizations play in the recovery era arising from the global pandemic occasioned by COVID-19, especially as migrant workers have been identified among the most vulnerable groups impacted by the pandemic.

Commending the NLC for seeing the process through, she encouraged the Congress and its affiliates to ensure ownership of the resource, as the Guide also signals a wake-up call to increased involvement of workers organizations in labour migration processes at the national level.

Major highlights during the workshop included a section-by-section review and consideration of contents in the Information Guide by stakeholders, upon which a motion for validation was moved by Comrade Bola Ajayi, Secretary of the Non-Academic Staff Union of Universities and other Associated Institutions (NASU) of the Federal Capital Territory. The motion was seconded by Comrade Abubakar Yakubu, Chairperson, FCT Chapter of the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE)

Most recent data referenced in the ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers reveal that the number of people migrating for work internationally increased from 164 million in 2017 to 169 million in 2019. This is indicative of a rise of five million migrant workers at the onset of the global pandemic, informing a need for countries of origin to put in place improved frameworks, mechanisms and practices that ensure adequate protection and promotion of rights of all workers, including migrant workers.

It is within this context and through the framework of the FAIRWAY programme currently being implemented by ILO that the collaboration with NLC is being facilitated with a view to support workers activities around labour migration and further strengthen coordination between workers organizations.

The Information Guide is contextualized for migrants, including migrant workers returning to Nigeria. It contains basic facts on return and reintegration processes, as well as information on how returning migrant workers can be supported to undertake dignified return and reintegration. Also included in the Guide are tips and links to government support services, including the role trade unions play in return, readmission, and reintegration processes in Nigeria.

The workshop was convened from 17 – 18 March and had in attendance representatives from the Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA), as well as relevant government agencies, including the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, National Commission for Refugees Migrants and IDPs, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission and the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development.

## UN Assists More Than 500 Nigerians Stranded In Libya To Return Home



Nigerian migrants arrive safely at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos Photo: IOM / Styliya Kampania

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) yesterday assisted the safe return home of 162 Nigerian migrants from Libya, the fourth such charter flight for this year. So far 19,452 Nigerians have been assisted to voluntarily return home between April 2017 and February 2022, with more than 500 assisted this year alone.

The humanitarian flight with 41 women, 96 men, 14 children and 11 infants aboard departed from Tripoli, Tuesday morning and landed safely at Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos at 1630hrs.

COVID-19 and the challenging security situation in the country left many migrants stranded in Libya. Migrant workers like Yousef Al Hadji, who migrated from Nigeria to Libya in 2016 were significantly impacted. When his work hours as a gas attendant decreased dramatically, Yousef began working as a cleaner at a garbage facility to continue sending money to his family in Nigeria.

Once voluntary humanitarian return flights from Libya resumed in October 2021 after months of suspension due to border closures and restrictions, Yousef immediately volunteered to return to his country of origin.

"It has been six years since I first came to Libya, and I haven't seen my big family," he said when he visited an IOM facility for a medical assessment prior to his travel.

While it was difficult to be away for so long, he looked forward to reuniting with his family in Nigeria.

"These migrants have been waiting patiently for months to get a flight back home and reunite with their families and friends," said Stephen Rogers, IOM Nigeria Head of Sub-office in Lagos. "IOM's role is not over yet. We need to ensure their needs are accommodated under the best conditions and initiate their reintegration support back in the communities of origin."

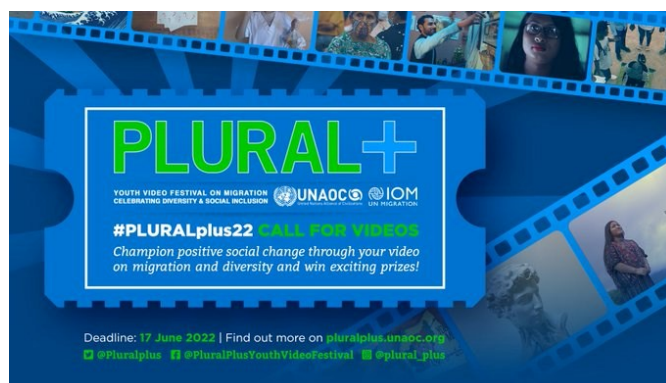
Prior to departure, the returnees underwent health checks including COVID-19 tests and received hygiene kits containing face masks and other protective gear. IOM also provided them with pre-departure counselling services, protection screening, transportation assistance and targeted assistance to migrants with specific situations of vulnerability such as pregnant women, unaccompanied migrant children, victims of trafficking and migrants with medical conditions.

Upon arrival, the returnees are assisted with food and refreshments, and a mobile phone to contact their families and remain in touch with IOM as they receive reintegration support, while vulnerable individuals were provided with non-food items such as clothes, shoes and other essential items. IOM will provide mental health and psychosocial support and business skills training to help them to kick-start income-generating activities as part of their reintegration assistance.

"The EU-IOM Joint Initiative has been instrumental in safely returning and reintegrating Nigerian nationals since April 2017 and we are happy to know that operations have resumed," said Samuela Isopi, Ambassador of the European Union to Nigeria and ECOWAS. "We are welcoming the flight from Tripoli, and we aim at successful reintegration for all returnees."

Libya has long been an important transit and destination country for migrants arriving from different parts of Africa. IOM's latest DTM report indicates that Nigerian migrants make up 6 per cent of migrants in Libya, the country's fifth largest migrant population. According to IOM data, Libya followed by Niger and Mali are the primary transit countries for Nigerian migrants.

IOM works closely with the Federal Government of Nigeria and specifically with the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), National Immigration Service (NIS), National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to facilitate the humane, orderly and dignified movement of returning migrants.





# An Ode To Mothers In Displacement

## ASABE – 30 years old



Asabe and her three children

First steps, first words, first teeth – important milestones mothers look forward to.

Asabe became a mother for the first time in her peaceful Gwozza village in Borno State, north-east Nigeria. After giving birth, she was worried that she could never have another child due to the difficult labour she went through. But that was soon forgotten when she looked at her son's sweet face. Asabe moved on to think about other things – baby's milestones, farming, becoming a nurse, sewing clothes for social events, and having another child. Three years after having her first child, she became pregnant with her second child and life as she knew it changed.

"One evening, I was sitting in front of my house with my mother when a man ran past us and shouted at us for sitting idle when attackers were destroying things in the village. We thought he was joking but some days later, the attackers were going from house to house, taking men from their homes. They even told us they were not interested in women and children. My husband fled our village and went to Abuja. They were burning churches and houses. Even if you were holding a spoon, they would collect it from you and throw it in the fire. I picked up my child like a wrapper and fled to Cameroon with my mother."

Although Asabe was pregnant, she trekked for two weeks, surviving on dirty water from puddles and wild fruits. They stayed in Cameroon for one month, on a diet of water and garri. "I woke up one morning and saw a driver in Khaki, saying they were taking Nigerians back home. I didn't know if they were telling the truth, but I was willing to take the chance. I was tired of not being able to properly feed myself and my son. This time around, I left my mother in Cameroon."

The car took them to a village in Adamawa where they lived for another month. Unfortunately, the village was attacked, and they had to move again. Asabe, now heavily pregnant, trekked for days until she hit a highway and saw a man from her village. She didn't think twice before getting into his car and begged him to take her into town. When they got to the man's house in Yola, she was able to call her sister's husband, who sent her some money to take a bus to Abuja. When she got to Abuja, she reunited with her husband in a camp for internally displaced persons – their home now for the past 8 years.

Since arriving in Abuja, Asabe not only gave birth to her second child, she now has four children in total. Her husband got her a sewing machine, but she no longer sews clothes for social events. She only alters clothes donated to women in the camp.

## HADIZA – 28 years old

For Hadiza Mustapha, housewife and resident of Maiduguri, north-east Nigeria, a perfect day is where she lays down and sleeps without disturbance. It is a day devoid of chores like cleaning, cooking, preparing her children for school and ensuring that they behave well once they return from school and Islamiyya classes. It is a day where the world pauses, for once, for Hadiza to catch her breath. But that is a tall dream for the mother of three, who navigates endless childcare and family demands daily, in a conflict-affected city.

"The circumstances when I was growing up were different from today. There was peace and my mother was a gift. She was my best friend, and I could tell her anything. I was enrolled in school, but I was not attentive. Ah, I was troublesome as a child. My earliest childhood memories are of me entering people's compounds with my friends to pluck fruits from trees on our way to school."

"This is one of my greatest regrets because I wish I had been seri-



Hadiza Mustapha

ous with my studies. If I had a chance to advise my younger self, it would be to take my studies seriously."

As a mother, Hadiza ensures that her children do not play with their education. "I am a strict mom and anyone who is a mother knows that motherhood is not easy. I love my children and I pray that God should bless my children with diligence. I want them to become important people in society."

## YAGANA – 38 years old

Yagana Makinta's earliest childhood memories were sprinting with her friends each morning to the Islamiyya, a religious school in Maiduguri, north-east Nigeria.

"I enjoyed it a lot. It was fun partly because my parents did not enroll me in a formal school. The Islamiyya gave me the opportunity to play and bond with friends. Only the men in my family could go to school. It was unfortunate, because I wanted to be a doctor and would have loved to help people."

Now a mother of five, that experience made Yagana resolve to enroll her own daughters in school, but fate dealt her another blow. She lost her husband nine years ago when their last child was still breastfeeding. It was during the time when the Civilian Joint Task Force was mobilizing against armed groups. He was killed in a retaliatory attack by armed groups in Maduri, not far from their home. *Continue on the page 10.*



## UN, Partners Mark International Women’s Day



UNIC Knowledge Management Assistant, Ms Bolanle Olumekor, addresses the audience at the International Women’s Day observance in Lagos.



Information Manager of ECOWAS-GIABA, Mr Tim Melaye, addresses the audience at the International Women’s Day observance in Lagos.

The United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Nigeria; Warien Rose Foundation; and the South African Consulate General in Lagos, have organized a symposium in commemoration of the International Women’s Day.

Speaking on the 2022 theme in his welcome remarks, “Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow”, the Director UN Information Centre Mr. Ronald Kayanja, who was represented by Ms Bolanle Olumekor, the Knowledge Management Assistant, noted that women were increasingly being recognized as more vulnerable to climate change impacts than men, as they constituted the majority of the world’s poor and were more dependent on the natural resources which climate change threatens the most.

“Without gender equality today, a sustainable future, and an equal future, remains beyond our reach. This International Women’s Day, let’s claim “Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow.” He said.

The Consular General, South African Consulate General in Lagos, Mr Darkey Afrika in his remarks highlighted the role of women and the importance of supporting women, promoting their rights, and breaking all barriers and all forms of marginalization to make the world a better place.

The keynote speaker Mr Tim Melaye, the Information Manager of ECOWAS-GIABA highlighted the various challenges faced by women and girls.

He stated that women and girls would experience the greatest impacts of the climate crisis which would put women’s lives and livelihoods at risk, as women depend more on, yet have less access to, natural resources, and often bear a disproportionate responsibility for securing food, water, and fuel.

### An Ode To Mothers In Displacement ...continued from page 9

To date, that incident remains the singular event that changed her life.

With Yagana as the breadwinner, life is now difficult for the family.

“I love my children. I am close to them just as my mother was close to me. But it is the hardest thing on earth to be a mother when you are also a widow. I must be there for my children financially and morally. My children are enrolled in school, but feeding is a constant challenge. I have a small business, but money is never enough.”

### HAMSATU – 31 years old

Hamsatu Liman’s childhood dream was to be a nurse.

“I just wanted to work in a hospital. I admire people who work there. I wanted to help people, women particularly.” said the native of Maiduguri, in north-east Nigeria.

As attractive as the health sector was to Hamsatu, financial and other constraints soon robbed the young woman of her dreams of being a health worker. She eventually traded the School of Health for the Mohammed Goni College of Legal and Islamic Studies in Maiduguri.

“My cousin was my role model while growing up. She was always calm and helped poor people. I still dream of going back to school. But it looks impossible with three young children. I want my children to be successful and educated. That is my wish for them as a mother.”



## WOMENx: Sharing Transformation Ideas For Women's Empowerment



Hansatu Adegbite, Executive Director of Women in Management, Business and Public Service (WIMBIZ), speaking on Sustainability and Women-owned Businesses at the WOMENx event

“The only way she is able to take care of her children is by cooking and selling Indomie noodles”, Hansatu Adegbite said of a mother of three who lives in one room with her family, “This is the reality of the women in our society that are trying to build businesses”, she added. Hansatu Adegbite is Executive Director of Women in Management, Business and Public Services (WIMBIZ) in Nigeria, and was one of four speakers at WOMENx.

On 17 March 2022 UN Women Nigeria held the first edition of her WOMENx event. WOMENx is an initiative of UN Women Nigeria. It presents a platform for seasoned speakers and gender experts to spread transformation ideas and evidence-based findings that would amplify women's issues, and spur social change and policy action.

This first edition of WOMENx was organised to commemorate the International Women's Day. This year's theme was 'Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow'. UN Women leveraged on the annual International Women's Day to draw attention to the need for concerted action towards promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through strategic activities implemented in partnership with the government of Nigeria and other partners within the month of March, which has increasingly come to be recognised as International Women's Month.

Speakers at WOMENx spoke on inter-related issues that allude to the theme of 2022 International Women's Day. Hansatu Adegbite spoke on Sustainability and Women-owned Businesses. She examined the challenges faced by women in building businesses and reiterated that, to sustain businesses, women must pay attention to the environment, social climate, strategic communications, and creative solutions. She also mentioned good governance as a required factor for sustainability and therefore the need to have more women in leadership and government.

Rinsola Abiola, a young female politician who is currently contesting for National Youth Leader of her party, and Executive Director of Equity Now, spoke on Let's Get Women Elected!. She decried the low representation of women in government. According to Rinsola, “There are only 11 women in the House of Repre-

sentatives and 7 women in the Senate. However, in 2015, 22 women were elected to House of Representatives; it means the number of women elected reduced by half in the 2019 general elections. The number of women state legislators also reduced from 55 to 40”.

Rinsola further examined how low women's representation is impacting social development; she proposed that Nigerian women build influence from their communities and sustain political engagements over time. Rinsola also recommended that women mobilize en masse in support of women candidates, only then will the figures change.

“Bottomline here for me is, the rural woman, when she is buoyant, she would always give”, said another speaker, Habiba Ali, “The way our world is going, there is a need for us to give; not just to give to human beings that are with us but to also give back to the earth that we are all tapping from”, she added.

Habiba Ali, Executive Director of Sosai Renewable Energies, spoke on Climate Change and the Rural Woman. In addressing sustainability, she informed the audience that, rural women bear the brunt of climate change. She reiterated that the rural woman needs to be empowered to mitigate the impact of climate change as well as have a means of livelihood.

“The way my mum works is like a military general. She had a timetable; this week you are doing dishes, the next week you are cooking...”, said Rotimi Olawale who spoke on Can a Nigerian Man be a Feminist? Rotimi Olawale is the Executive Director of Youth Hub Africa, a gender and youth advocate.

Rotimi mentioned that his mother treated all her children equally, which was how he learnt how to do domestic chores. Today he helps his wife in the kitchen. He asserted that a Nigerian man can be a feminist if he considers the realities rather than social norms and customs. He also appealed to men to support women who contest for elective positions.

WOMENx brought to light the connectivity between women's representation in leadership and governance and how this impacts gender equality, livelihoods, climate change and other women's issues.



## UN Strengthens MSMEs, Manufacturers On Quality Healthcare Products And Personal Protective Equipment – A COVID 19 Response Project.

*The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has led to a global health emergency and economic slowdown, necessitating prevention while promoting economic activities. Using the International Labour Organization (ILO) Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) modules for business development, UN agencies in collaboration with the government of Nigeria jointly implemented a project to enhance the capacity of local MSMEs/Manufacturers to produce quality Personal Protective Equipment and other health related products. The SIYB training, jointly implemented by ILO and UN Women, has trained up to 114 MSMEs from the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.*

The United Nations System in Nigeria and the Government of Nigeria implemented a capacity strengthening project for local MSMEs and manufacturers to produce high-quality Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and healthcare-related products. The project, funded by the UN Basket Fund and jointly implemented by International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Women, supports the capacity of Nigerian MSMEs and manufacturers to meet both domestic and foreign demand.

As the pandemic disrupted global supply chains, many countries are focusing on meeting their domestic needs. Many MSMEs are shifting into the production of PPEs to take advantage of the economic opportunity. Several factories, industries, and local manufacturers (including tailors) have shifted their lines of production to take advantage of this increased demand. However, this surge has not been without challenges ranging from understanding how to build a viable business to producing quality PPEs.

In her opening remarks at the event held on the 28th of February 2022, the ILO Director, Ms Vanessa Phala, regretted the effect of COVID-19 on the economy of the country. Speaking through Dino Corell, she stated that the crisis has affected investment, growth and employment while exerting negative impact on the competitiveness of micro, small and medium enterprises. "The pandemic has an asymmetric impact on small firms and the workers employed in these units, which have borne the brunt of the fallout from the pandemic" she said.

Ms Vanessa Phala expressed optimism and reiterated that Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Nigeria are vital to achieving decent and productive employment as they globally account for two-thirds of all jobs and create many new jobs.

In his special remarks, the Hon Minister of Labour and Employment Dr. Chris Ngige represented by the Dr. Martina Nwordu, Director of Special Duties and Projects appreciated the different struggles that entrepreneurs passed through and applauded the training as being strategic.

The minister stated that "It is, therefore, a good initiative to support these groups of entrepreneurs to access information for the nurturing and positioning of young business in Nigeria, as a best practice". He also noted that through the activities of NDE, a Parastatal under the Ministry of Labour, SMEs have benefited as groups and as individuals from entrepreneurial development as means of job creation. He pledged the ministry's willingness to effectively support and participate in the project.

UN Women National Programme Officer, Ms. Patience Ekeoba who represented the UN Women Country Representative, highlighted that UN Women will pay special attention in enhancing marketing capacities of women owned MSMEs for business growth expansion as well as taking up policy issues associated with the distribution of products produced by women and young women entrepreneurs and amplify gender-responsive procurement principles to ensure that government agencies, development partners and private sector entities prioritize PPEs produced by women.

The UNIDO Chief Technical Adviser for the project, Jarl M Hansstein, noted that a needs analysis has been conducted on

selected MSMEs to reveal the areas where they needed support and incentives to improve on their products and businesses. He also mentioned that the project aims to help enterprises to improve the quality of their PPEs and to target also export markets within the ECOWAS region.

The WHO focal person for the project Tayo Hamzat, stated that the project will not only contribute to improve Nigeria's health status but will also contribute to boosting economy as it opens Nigeria's product to international market because the project was designed in a way to produce quality PPE products in a safe and business-healthy environment. He added that this was a rich project because the selected beneficiaries would have interventions from four Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNOs) and urged the participants to ensure that they make great use of the opportunity.

The Director, Economic Services, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs through the Desk Officer, Women Economic Empowerment, Mrs. Joy Obaje pledged their support to the project. He also noted some interventions of the ministry to support women entrepreneurs like access to finance interventions as well the 50 million African Women Speak Platform Project (50MAWSP) funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB) to contribute to the economic and social empowerment of 50 million women in businesses across 38 African countries.

The SIYB training was one of the intervention areas under the entire project and commenced with the training of trainers. The trainers were nominated by the tripartite partners of the ILO and UN women including Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA), Trade Union Congress (TUC) of Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMLE), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) in addition to those nominated from the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (FMWA).

The Trainings-of-Entrepreneurs (TOEs) using SIYB modules focuses on starting and improving small businesses as a strategy for creating more and better employment for women and men. The programme is composed of a set of inter-related training packages for different levels of business maturity, including Start Your Business; Improve Your Business; and Expand Your Business. SIYB aims at increasing the viability of MSMEs through management principles suitable for the environment of developing economies.

Up to 114 MSMEs (63 female owned and 51 male owned enterprises) from the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria have been trained on how to grow business in a gender-responsive manner. The trainings were held in three different locations across the country: 64 MSMEs from the northern region (NC, NE, and NW) were trained in Abuja from 28th February to 11 March; 25 MSMEs from the South-west region were trained in Lagos from 14th to 18th March, and up to 25 MSMEs from South-East and south-south regions were trained in Enugu from 21st to 25th March.

"In my five years of running this business, I have never thought of expansion, because I always had this believe that it is scary. This training made me to understand that it is because of some wrong business practices that I have upheld. For example, I have operated with the mentality that the business capital is mine, and as such I should utilize it the way I choose to. I learnt in detail the financial implication of every aspect of my business, as well as separating business money from personal money." Rashidat, a participant and PPE entrepreneur from Kogi said.

## ACCEL Africa Project Empowers Cooperatives In Nigeria's Cocoa Value Chain

*The ILO ACCEL Africa Project in Nigeria is extending partnerships for the elimination of child labour and forced labour in Nigeria by strengthening support systems for farmers especially in the cocoa value chain, where child labour is prevalent owing to poverty.*



*A group photograph of participants*

The International Labour Organization's Dutch Government funded ACCEL Africa Project in Nigeria has empowered a network comprising field trainers, managers of cooperative unions, members of cocoa farmers' cooperative society and other supporting organizations within Nigeria's cocoa value chain to eliminate child labour, in line with the country's aspiration to attain SDG Target 8.7. by 2025.

From 7 to 11 March 2022, 40 stakeholders in the cocoa value chain were sensitized and enlightened on global best practices regarding child labour, forced labour, workers' rights, freedom of association, good agronomic practices, pesticide usage, record keeping, better price negotiation, children education, child worker inclusion in negotiations, monitoring of school attendance, leadership and team building.

Facilitated in collaboration with the ILO's tripartite partners and academics in the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), this Training of Trainers (ToT) empowerment is an implementation of recommendations from a 2020 gap analysis supported by the ACCEL Africa Project, which identified the sensitization and training of cooperatives as a response to the child labour emergency.

Speaking at the commencement of the 'Sensitization and Capacity Building Workshop for Cooperative Societies' on 7 March 2022 at Heritage Hotel, Akure, Ondo State; Dr. Agatha Kolawole, the National Project Coordinator of the ACCEL Africa Project in Nigeria, identified cocoa cooperatives as critical stakeholders in the multifaceted, coordinated approach to eliminate child labour.

According to Agatha, the contributions of cooperatives to this shared responsibility will complement the recorded progression in behaviour change especially by members of focal communities in Fagbo 1 and 2, Ipoba 2, Aponmu, Oke Agunla, Ile Oluji/Oke Igbo, Bankemo and Wasimi communities where community members are increasingly taking ownership of the intervention through voluntary contributions to education funds for vulnerable children, school renovations and skills acquisition support.

Over 500 men and women members of cooperatives will be supported by the project to have better access to productive, welfare and financial services and improve their capacity to address child labour issues within their businesses.

While calling for support from all stakeholders, a participant at the workshop and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Development) of FUTA, Professor Phillip Oguntunde suggested an extension of the Project to benefit many more people, describing ACCEL Africa as a provider of hope for communities, helping children find proper fulfilment.

Temidayo Owolabi, a participant and member of the Sustainability Team of Agro Traders, Alagbaka, says although there had been an involvement in the fight against child labour, the workshop has revealed other ways to help farmers and identified other potential partners for better results.

With the guidance of the consultant for the workshop, Dr. Akinagbe Oluwole Matthew of the Department of Agricultural Extension and Communication Technology, FUTA; Dr Agatha Kolawole, ILO ACCEL Africa National Project Coordinator; Lydia Eke, ILO ACCEL Africa National Project Officer; and the contributions of Guy Tchami, Cooperative policy and research specialist at ILO, the participants underwent practical sessions on: understanding the forms of child labour; the national and international legal frameworks regulating child labour; the benefits of eliminating child labour; recognizing the different forms of child labour existing within the activities of agricultural cooperatives, their members and relevant communities; specific actions for cocoa cooperatives to eliminate child labour, designing an action plan to eliminate child labour and support/monitor its implementation; and an action plan to address internal and external issues.

"I am pretty impressed about the depth and focus of the programme. What remains is the deepening of the implementation within Ondo State and in Nigeria as a whole".

-Chuks Ofolue, Advocacy Manager, PIND (Partnership Initiative in the Niger Delta).

The certified training incorporated a situated learning approach focusing on skills and competencies specific to cocoa farming practices by applying active experimentation, reproducing work-like situations, reinforcing participants' capacity and acceptance to implement newly acquired knowledge.

In the coming weeks, participants are expected to step down the training to members of their cooperatives, apply best standards and ensure their contribution to the elimination of child labour by implementing their action plans and impacting their spheres of influence and beyond.



## Tuberculosis Is Not A Death Sentence — Survivor’s Journey To Recovery



Ede John Chimobi

When 29 years old Mr Ede John Chimobi, a native of Mgbiji in Isuuzor Local Government Area (LGA), Enugu state, tested positive for tuberculosis (TB), he was shocked as he never considered himself to be at risk.

Mr Chimobi, who works as a security personnel, had been feeling unwell - coughing at night, his chest was hurting, sweating, and not sleeping well.

He first got some drugs from chemist shops, but it worsened. He visited the hospital after a concerned neighbour advised him to seek medical attention at the hospital.

My neighbour said “you are coughing too much. Why not go to Mile 4 hospital? They will help you out”.

Mr Ede said he is glad he heeded the advice.

Following his physician’s assessment, as per the presentation of his signs and symptoms, he was tested for TB, and his result was positive.

“At the hospital, they explained to me that TB is airborne, and it can affect any one of us especially when we are in contact with an untreated patient. I had to take my brother to the hospital for testing as instructed by the nurse. He was also diagnosed of TB.

For my own treatment, I was on admission in the hospital for 2 months as I was severely sick and provided with good food. After I was discharged, I went back to my normal lifestyle of drinking and smoking. I did not complete the remaining 4 months of the medications and so the disease resurfaced again,” he said.

### Relapse

This time, Mr Chimaobi was diagnosed with Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (DR-TB). Usually DR-TB occurs when bacteria become resistant to the first line drugs used to treat TB.

“I went back to Mile 4 hospital, and the nurses told me that I had DR-TB because I had stopped taking the medications for complete duration of 6 months due to my bad lifestyle. I was re-admitted and treated for 4months and thereafter discharged to continue treatment in the community in a health facility close to where I reside for the remaining 7 months. Now that I am better, I have quit smoking and drinking alcohol.

I am now healthy and wish to reiterate that the first and second treatments I received were free,” he said.

### Battling stigma

Getting back to the community was not easy as some of Mr Chimaobi’s friends and family stigmatized him during his ailment. Some friends and family members were avoiding me. It was only my mother that stood by me. My mother was very supportive. She took care of me until I recovered. The nurses advised my mother to wear a face mask to avoid getting infected since the disease is air-borne.

### Government and partners’ intervention

Tuberculosis (TB) is one of the top infectious killer diseases, and every day, about 4,100 women, men and children die, while 30,000 people fall ill from the disease. Nigeria ranks sixth amongst 30 countries with the highest-burden globally and first in Africa in the number of undetected cases.

Since Mr Chimaobi returned home, he said he has been using his experience to encourage people coughing to get tested.

“I used my story to encourage people with cough of 2 or more weeks’ duration to get tested and that TB is curable. For instance, after I came back from the hospital, a friend we used to share cigarettes with started coughing. I advised him to go to Mile 4 for a TB test, and he was adamant, claiming it was an ordinary cough. I insisted, narrating my experience to him and the common TB symptoms. He finally agreed to go for the test and behold he was found to have TB. After receiving treatment, he felt better and was happy, claiming I preserved his life,” he said.

The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the National Tuberculosis, Buruli Ulcer and Leprosy Control Program (NTBLCP) and other partners working on TB control and elimination in Nigeria, have been providing support towards implementation of some strategic interventions to improve TB case findings in the country.

Mr Chimaobi is one of the TB survivors in the country who received excellent treatment and support services through the government implemented TB program that provides free TB services with support from partners and the WHO.

In 2021, Nigeria notified 207,785 TB cases; 50% higher compared to the notified 138,591 cases in 2020.



INVEST  
TO END TB



## UN Joins NiMet To Commemorate The World Meteorological Day



WMO Representative for North, Central, and West Africa, Bernard Gomez, presenting his goodwill remark at the event.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) joined the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) to celebrate the World Meteorological Day in Nigeria on 23 March 2022 with the theme of this year's celebration, "Early Warning and Early Action. Hydrometeorological and Climate Information for Disaster Risk Reduction."

Speaking at the event, WMO Representative, Bernard Gomez, stated that weather, climate, and water extremes are becoming more frequent and intense in many parts of the world as a result of climate change. Sub-Saharan Africa is exposed more than ever before to multiple related hazards, which are themselves evolving as a result of population growth, urbanization and environmental degradation.

Globally, death tolls have fallen decade by decade- from over 50,000 deaths on the average per year in the 1970s to less than 20,000 in the 2010s. Despite this progress, only 40% of WMO member countries have multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS). There are gaps in weather observations in Africa as just 26% of reporting stations met WMO standards in 2019. These gaps pose a risk to the accuracy of early warnings locally and globally.

Forecasts of what the weather will BE are no longer enough. Impact-based forecasts that inform the public of what the weather will DO are vital to save lives and livelihoods. Yet one in three people are still not adequately covered by Early Warning systems.

Greater coordination between national meteorological and hydrological services, disaster management authorities and development agencies is fundamental to better prevention, preparedness and response.

Early warning is relevant today for several weather events which include thunderstorms and associated lightning, hail, damaging wind, heavy precipitation, and tornadoes; heavy precipitation which can lead to flash floods, severe winds, visibility, sand and dust storms, and poor visibility.

With evidence showing that extreme events of weather and climate will become more frequent and intense in Nigeria in the coming years, it is necessary to ensure weather, water and climate services gain the attention of policy makers in governments at the highest levels.

WMO encourages the implementation of the national framework for weather, climate and water services through strengthen stakeholder collaboration and sub-national programmes for Agriculture and Food Security, Disaster Risk Reduction, Energy, Transport, Leisure and Hospitality and Health.

The WMO representative invited Nigeria to take a leading role in its implementation of policies that would strengthen data availability, data sharing and data utilization for greater forecast accuracy for all in the sub-region as Nigeria aspires to become a Regional WMO Integrated Global Observing Services Centre.

Delivering a keynote address on the theme of this year's celebration, the Director General of the Nigerian Meteorological Agency, Professor Mansur Matazu stated that NiMet, the National Hydrological Services (NIHSA), and Disaster Managers must work in synergy to reduce risks associated with weather related disasters. An example of best practice is the adoption of co-production techniques in the Seasonal Climate Prediction (SCP) of NiMet which has over the years served as an Early Warning Tool for multi-stakeholders.

Prof Matazu revealed that in recognition of the significance of the seasonal climate predictions and other Early Warning products and services, the Agency has gone into partnerships with government institutions, non-governmental organisations, and host of others for improved service delivery.

He mentioned that NiMet's Early Warning products have found their way to the Highest decision-making body in Nigeria, the Federal Executive Council. The 2022 Seasonal Climate Prediction was further presented in translated versions in three Nigerian languages. He urged stakeholders to rise, take up NiMet forecasts and respond with appropriate actions for resilience, adaptation, and mitigation. He ended his keynote remarks with a quote by the WMO Secretary General, Professor Petteri Taalas which states "Early Warning Systems are a proven, effective adaptation measure, which saves lives and livelihoods."

The event was graced by representatives of Heads of invited Agencies such as the Nigeria Hydrological Agency (NIHSA) and the FCT Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Highlights included the presentation of awards to participating schools that came top in an essay competition organized by NiMet.



## Nigeria, ECOWAS Support UN's Food And Nutrition Assistance To Vulnerable Families With Us\$1m In 2021



*Excited women beneficiaries of WFP's interventions.*

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) received the sum of US\$1 million in 2021 from the Government of Nigeria as part of an ECOWAS humanitarian assistance to the Nigerian Government for victims of violent conflicts in North West and North East Nigeria.

The fund from ECOWAS was granted to the government of Nigeria from the ECOWAS Regional Stabilization Fund. The Government of Nigeria accordingly sought the collaboration of WFP in Nigeria to apply the fund for alleviating food and nutrition needs in Katsina, Zamfara and Borno states.

The programme targeted 840 food insecure households (some 4,196 persons) in Zamfara, Katsina and Borno states with food assistance. The target beneficiaries receive an average cash transfer of NGN 27,000 in their prepaid bank cards or WFP SCOPE cards every month to buy their preferred food from local markets. Beneficiaries are encouraged to buy a wide range of local nutritious foods from their preferred shops. Cash transfers have an additional advantage of stimulating local markets and agricultural production.

To prevent acute malnutrition in children in the first 1,000 days of their lives, the programme also provides nutrition assistance to children 6-23 months old and to pregnant and breastfeeding women from vulnerable and food insecure households. Some 14,070 children and 1,932 pregnant/breastfeeding women receive specialized nutritious food in the three (3) project states.

In addition to providing life-saving food and nutrition assistance to vulnerable families, WFP is also using the ECOWAS donation to build the resilience of the households in the conflict-affected states of Borno, Adamawa, Yobe and Katsina. The project will provide milling machines and training support to 603 returnees from Cameroon and displaced rural women to support them in generating some income to sustain their livelihoods.

Honorable Minister Sadiya Farouq, Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development (FMHADMSD), acknowledged that "This project has provided the FMHADMSD the unique opportunity of showcasing best practices of partnership and collaboration in delivering humanitarian intervention. It has equally advanced the efforts of the Nigerian Government in touching the lives of a critical mass of Nigerians in vulnerable situations."

Dr. Siga Fatima Jagne, Commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender, ECOWAS Commission, noted that "In line with the humanitarian mandate of the ECOWAS Commission and in response to the Decision of the Fiftieth Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of December 17, 2016, to assist population in North East Nigeria affected by terrorism, the ECOWAS Commission in strong collaboration with the Government of Nigeria and the World Food Programme is providing humanitarian support to our populations in need in Nigeria and will continue to build the resilience of our people to bridge the humanitarian-development nexus across the West African region for a prosperous ECOWAS Community."

Ronald Sibanda, WFP Representative and Country Director (a.i.) acknowledged that "The Government of Nigeria's contribution, through ECOWAS, came at a very critical point as conflict and impact of climate change continue to drive hunger in the country. In these affected states, persistent conflict, climate shocks, high food prices and reduced household purchasing power undermine people's ability to feed themselves. WFP welcomes this contribution which underpins efforts to continue providing life-saving food and nutrition support and livelihoods assistance to those most in need in the conflict-affected states".

# PHOTO NEWS



## Captions, from left to right in a clockwise direction

1. L-R, IMF Resident Representative, Ari Aisen, representative of former President Olusegun Obasanjo, Iyalode Alaba Lawson, UN Women Country Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Comfort Lamptey, Deputy Chair, Committee of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hon. Vincent Ofumelu, Deputy Chief Whip in the House of Representatives, Hon Nkiruka Onyejeocha, Representative of Sultan of Sokoto III, Emir of Keffi, Alhaji Shehu Yamusa III, Acting Canadian High Commissioner to Nigeria, Kevin Tokar, UN Resident Coordinator, Matthias Schmale and British High Commissioner to Nigeria, Catriona Laing. Photo: UN Women/Faremi Olanrewaju
2. UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator Matthias Schmale and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama, discussing the UN technical cooperation with Nigeria at the Minister's Office in Abuja.
3. Borno State Governor, Prof Babagana Zulum (right) and UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator Matthias Schmale (Left), visit an ongoing stabilization project that will help restore access to basic services, increase security and enable livelihood opportunities for a community that has been displaced by conflict..

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